

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PORT M 00705 150451Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00 COME-00
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R 150230Z MAY 78

FM AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3257

UNCLAS PORT MORESBY 0705

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR

SUBJECT: AIRLINE ROUTE NEGOTIATIONS US-PNG

1. ON MAY 10 AMBASSADOR OLMSTED ACCOMPANIED BY E/C OFFICER MAYBARDUK MET WITH GPNG TEAM FOR INITIAL DISCUSSIONS OF PROPOSED AIR LINKS BETWEEN US AND PNG. GPNG TEAM WAS LED BY JOE TAUVASA, CONTROLLER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND INCLUDED BRIAN GREY, GENERAL MANAGER, AIR NIUGINI, AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH GPNG AND DEPARTMENTS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND CIVIL AVIATION.

2. TAUVASA STATED THAT GPNG WAS IN BASIC AGREEMENT WITH BOTH THE DRAFT CHARTER AGREEMENT AND THE PROVISIONS OF THE BASIC AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT. THOUGH THE GPNG TEAM LEFT THEMSELVES THE OPTION TO MAKE SMALL CHANGES IN THE TEXT AT A FUTURE DATE, THEY GAVE A CLEAR IMPRESSION THAT ANY SUCH CHANGES WOULD BE MINOR AND THAT THE BASIC TEXTS WERE ACCEPTABLE TO THEM. IN REGARD TO ROUTES THEY PROPOSE FLIGHTS BETWEEN PORT MORESBY AND HONOLULU AND PORT MORESBY AND GUAM.

3. GPNG IS AFRAID THAT THE CAPACITY OF LARGE AMERICAN AIRLINE CARRIERS COULD OVERWHELM AIR NIUGINI. THEY WOULD THEREFORE LIKE TO BE ABLE TO HAVE THE ABILITY TO DEVELOP A WEEKLY SERVICE BETWEEN PORT MORESBY AND HONOLULU. ONCE
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SUCH A SERVICE WAS ESTABLISHED AND IT APPEARED ECONOMICALLY POSSIBLE TO ESTABLISH A TWICE WEEKLY SERVICE, GPNG OFFICIALS WOULD THEN EXPECT AN AMERICAN AIRLINE TO START SERVICE ON THE HONOLULU - PORT MORESBY ROUTE. IN EXCHANGE, THEY SUGGEST THAT AN AMERICAN AIRLINE FIRST DEVELOP A ONCE WEEKLY ROUTE BETWEEN GUAM AND PORT MORESBY. ONCE A SECOND WEEKLY FLIGHT IS JUSTIFIED, AIR NIUGINI WOULD THEN

START ITS OWN SERVICE.

4. WITH REGARD TO ARTICLE 12 OF THE BASIC AIR TRANSPORT AGREEMENT, PNG WOULD PREFER TO CONDUCT BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WITH REGARD TO THE FIXING OF SPECIFIC TARIFFS. THEY HAD NO OBJECTION TO IATA STANDARD PRINCIPLES FORMING THE BASIS FOR REACHING AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS BUT WOULD LIKE TO AVOID THE FORMAL IATA NEGOTIATION PROCEDURES. GPNG HAS PROPOSED A TARIFF BETWEEN PORT MORESBY AND HONOLULU, ONE WAY, OF K377, ROUGHLY US\$528. ONLY SLIGHTLY MORE THAN HALF THE PORT MORESBY-SYDNEY-HONOLULU FARE.

5. EMBASSY WILL POUCH AGREED MINUTES OF MEETING. PLEASE ADVISE APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT OFFICE FOR ADDRESSING.
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